FREESPACE 2

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STARTING FREESPACE 2

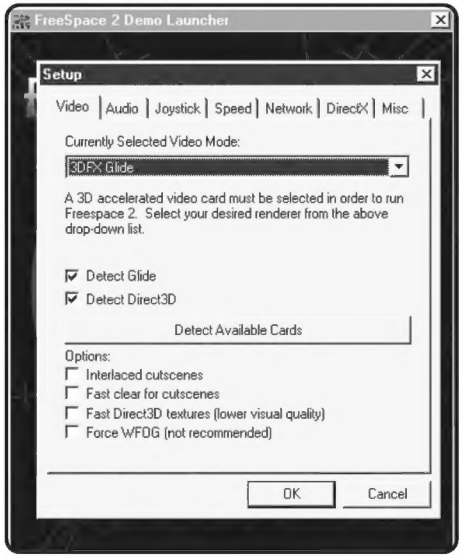
INSTALLING FREESPACE 2

Please see the Installation Instructions insert found in your FreeSpace 2 box.

If you have a problem installing FreeSpace 2, please consult the README.TXT file. If you don't see the solution to the problem, please check our FreeSpace 2 support page at www.interplay.com/support/freespace2.

Once FreeSpace 2 is installed, the Launcher menu appears on your screen.

The first time you start the Launcher, the Setup window will appear automatically. This enables you to optimize FreeSpace 2 for your system. Go through each tab (Video, Audio, Joystick, etc.) to ensure that the device settings are correct. If the device listed in the drop-down text box is not the one you want FreeSpace 2 to use, click on the "Detect" button to have the Setup program find the proper device. During Video setup, when FreeSpace 2 detects your 3D accelerator, it also determines the available resolution and color depth options from which you can select.



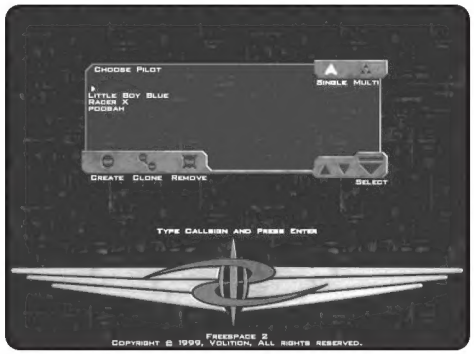
Once you've set up things the way you'd like, click on the OK button.

Once back at the Launcher, click the "Play" button and FreeSpace 2 will start.

CREATING A PILOT

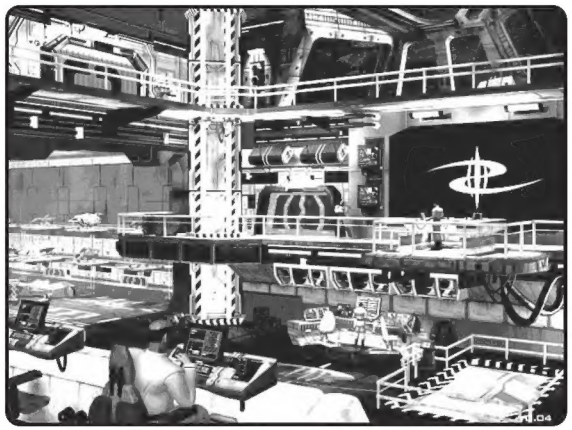
The first screen you see is the Pilot Selection screen. The first time you play FreeSpace 2, you're prompted for your pilot's Callsign. This is your pilot's nickname for FreeSpace 2. After you type in your pilot's Callsign, press ENTER.

Once in the game, you can also manage your pilots from the Barracks room off the Flight Deck.



THE FLIGHT DECK

The Flight Deck screen is the main menu for FreeSpace 2. From here, you can access the Ready Room, Barracks, Campaign Room, Tech Room, Options screen, or Exit (to Windows). Repeatedly clicking the right mouse button cycles through the various hotspots in the Flight Deck.



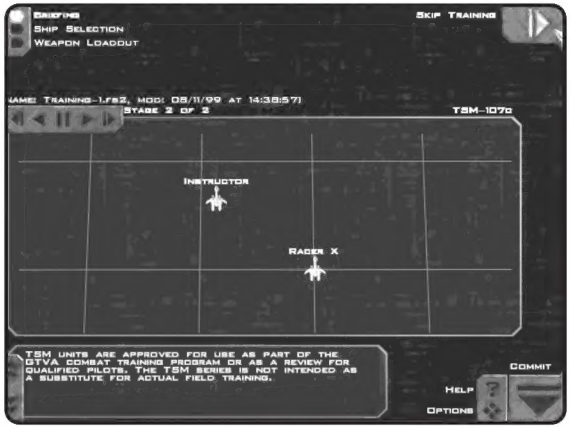
Press F1 to bring up a Help Overlay that outlines the locations of the various rooms in the Flight Deck. Hitting F1 anywhere else in FreeSpace 2 brings up context-sensitive Help screens.

For now, use the mouse to choose the Ready Room to begin your first training mission.

> ***NOTE:*** *It is strongly recommended that new pilots play the training missions offered during the FreeSpace 2 Campaign. These missions teach the basics of flight control, targeting, weapons management, and communication in the game. If you're an experienced FreeSpace player, you may want to skip the first group of training missions.*

TRAINING MISSIONS

When you create a new pilot and enter the Ready Room, you're placed in the first training mission's Briefing screen.


Briefing
Ship Selection
Weapon Loadout
Skip Training
TSM-107a
Instructor
Rader X
TSM units are approved for use as part of the GTVA combat training program or as a review for qualified pilots. The TSM series is not intended as a substitute for actual field training.
Commit
Help
Options

Here you receive a brief overview of the upcoming training mission, including instructions on your objectives and how to meet them.

To the upper left are choices for Briefing, Ship Selection, and Weapon Loadout. In later missions, you'll use these buttons to move to the different pre-mission screens. For this first training mission, "Briefing" is all you need.

To the lower right are buttons for Help, Options, and Commit. "Help" is the same as pressing F1 and brings up a screen-specific overlay that briefly explains the on-screen options. "Options" brings you to a screen of game options, if you wish to customize the game's settings. "Commit" accepts your mission orders and sends you into the mission.

In the center of the Briefing screen is the mission map. This is a graphical representation of what you can expect in the mission. You may click on any map icon to see a more detailed view of it.

Below the mission map is the briefing text. If you have voice enabled in the game, the briefing is read to you, one stage at a time. To navigate through the briefing stages, use the arrow buttons on the top edge of the mission map (or use the cursor keys on your keyboard).

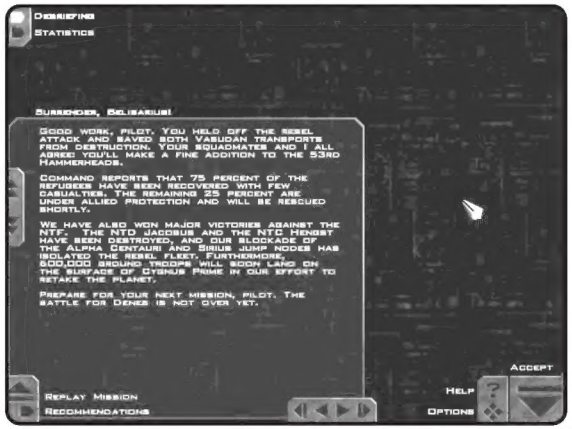
For help with flight and combat controls, press F1 during a mission. Screens listing the current control keys will appear. You may also use the Reference Card in the FreeSpace 2 box for lists of the default control keys.

Follow the instructor's commands during training missions. He will help you learn the basics of fighter control and combat. Watch the onscreen messages to see the keys needed to follow his orders.

Instructions given to you also appear in the Directives Display found on the left side of your HUD (Heads-Up Display).

DEBRIEFING

After each mission, including training missions, you are shown the Debriefing screen.


Debriefing
Statistics
Surrender, Belisarius!
Good work, pilot. You held off the rebel attack and saved both Vasudan transports from destruction. Your squadmates and I all agree: you'll make a fine addition to the 53rd Hammerheads.
Command reports that 75 percent of the refugees have been recovered with few casualties. The remaining 25 percent are under allied protection and will be rescued shortly.
We have also won major victories against the NTF. The NTD Jacobus and the NTC Hengist have been destroyed, and our blockade of the Alpha Centauri and Sirius jump nodes has isolated the rebel fleet. Furthermore, 600,000 ground troops will soon land on the surface of Dynhur Prime in our effort to retake the planet.
Prepare for your next mission, pilot. The battle for Deneb is not over yet.
Accept
Help
Options
Replay Mission
Recommendations

During the Debriefing, your commanding officer gives a breakdown of the mission and evaluates your performance. If you performed exceedingly well during a combat situation, you may be granted a medal or promotion during the Debriefing. If you failed one or more of your Primary Objectives, you may be forced to replay the mission.

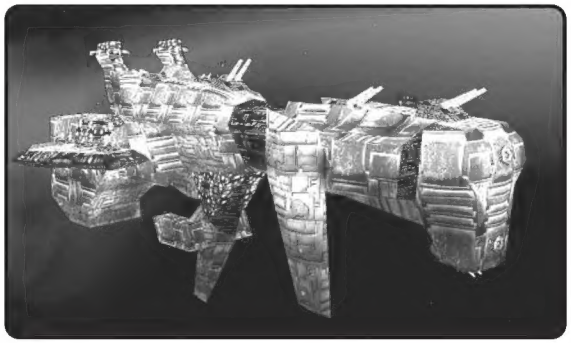
By pressing the "Recommendations" button, you can see specific tips on how to meet all outlined objectives.

You may also view your pilot's mission statistics from the Debriefing screen. To the upper left of the screen, you see the "Statistics" button. Clicking on it enables you to view Statistics for the mission you've just flown. Reviewing mission statistics is a good way to evaluate your performance.

If you followed the first training mission's instructions, you should now be ready for the remaining training missions. Press "Accept" to continue.

COMBAT READY!

Once you've completed training, you're ready to begin your tour of duty aboard the GTD Aquitaine. Good luck, pilot!



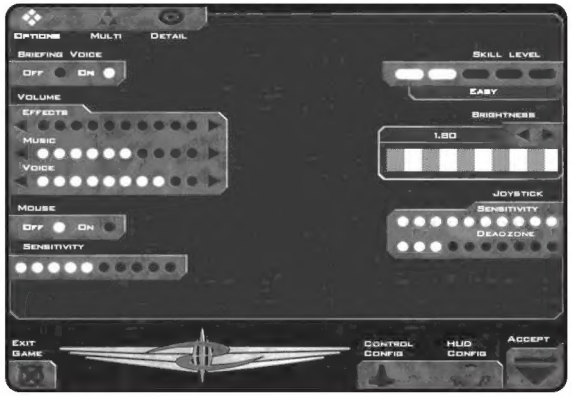
THE FLIGHT DECK

The Flight Deck serves as the main menu for FreeSpace 2. From this screen, you can access the Options, Ready Room, Barracks, Tech Room, and Campaign Room. You can also Exit to Windows. Clicking the right mouse button cycles through the different hotspots on the Flight Deck screen.

> ***NOTE:*** *Pressing* F1 *from anywhere in FreeSpace 2 brings up screen-specific help. If you're in a pre-mission interface screen, such as the Flight Deck, you see a Help Overlay that highlights hotspots and gives brief descriptions of each.*

OPTIONS

The Options area off the Flight Deck enables you to change many of the game's settings (this screen can be brought up at any time



in FreeSpace 2 by pressing the F2 key). From here, you can change the sound volume, skill level, detail settings, controls configuration, and other items.

Volume: This section has three separate controls for the volume levels for sound effects, music, and voices.

Voice Effects: This enables you to turn on or off the voice reading the mission briefing text.

Mouse: Turn this option "On" if you use a mouse to control your ship during missions. The "Sensitivity" setting determines how much your ship responds to movement of the mouse. The more lights, the more pronounced is the ship's response to the mouse's movement.

Skill Level: This alters the current skill/difficulty level used in FreeSpace 2 missions, from Very Easy all the way to Insane. When you create a pilot, it is set by default to Easy.

> ***NOTE:*** *Once a mission has begun, your Skill Level setting is locked in. You must wait until the mission is complete before changing it again.*

Brightness: All computer monitors handle darkening colors differently. To compensate for this, the Brightness setting helps adjust your visuals to the ideal range for your monitor. To set your brightness correctly, use the arrow buttons to adjust the value until the striped areas appear to be uniform patches of gray. Once you have set this value, you should use your monitor's brightness and contrast controls if you need to make further changes to the game's appearance.

Joystick: If you use a joystick to control your ship in FreeSpace 2, these settings help fine-tune your ship's responses. The "Sensitivity" setting determines how dramatically your ship turns in response to movement of the joystick. The "Deadzone" setting establishes how far you have to move the joystick before the ship begins to turn. If you're having trouble keeping targets near the center of your HUD screen, you may want to lower your joystick's Sensitivity setting and/or raise the Deadzone setting.

Exit Game: Clicking this button shuts down FreeSpace 2 and returns you to Windows.

Accept: Clicking this button enters all the changes you've made to the configuration settings, closes down the Options screen, and returns you to the screen from which you came.

The remaining buttons on the Options screen (Multi, Detail, Control Config, and HUD Config) take you to different sub-screens, described on the following pages.

MULTIPLAYER OPTIONS

The Multi screen presents all the configuration options you'll need to play multiplayer games of FreeSpace 2 over the Internet or a LAN (Local Area Network). These options are discussed in detail in the "Multiplayer FreeSpace 2" section, beginning on page 46.

DETAIL OPTIONS

The Detail screen enables you to change the various levels of detail used in FreeSpace 2. Since the game is designed to run on a wide range of computer types and speeds, you can set these values to match the performance of your hardware.

On the right side of the screen is a list of Preset Detail Levels. When FreeSpace 2 was installed, a default Detail Level was chosen for your computer based on its speed, RAM, and other hardware. If you notice slowdowns in single-player mode, you may want to change this to a lower level to speed up the framerate. Setting it higher makes objects and effects look better, but it may cause the game to run slower.

By using the "Custom" setting, you can change each of the individual detail settings (the column of settings on the left side of the screen) separately. This is useful if you find a particular detail setting more important than others. Changing any one of these individual settings automatically changes the Preset Detail Level to "Custom."

Individual detail settings include the following:

Model Detail: As a ship or object gets farther away, it changes to a simpler 3D model. This setting alters the distances at which those changes occur. Higher values put those distances farther away, giving you more detail at the cost of framerate speed. To improve framerate, set this to a lower value.

Nebula Detail: This setting controls the amount of graphical detail you see in the nebula missions. Setting this to a lower value improves your framerate in the nebulae.

3D Hardware Textures: The higher this setting, the more texture RAM FreeSpace 2 uses. This means that everything looks nicer, but the game slows down. Tweak this setting until you're happy with the game's framerate.

Particles: This alters the number of particles that are spewed when a ship suffers damage.

Impact Effects: This setting changes the number of weapon impact effects rendered.

Shield Hit Effects: This determines what you see when a ship's shield is hit. At its lowest setting, this completely turns off the shield-hit effect. At medium settings, this causes shield hits to render as 2D bitmaps. At higher settings, they appear as 3D-mesh objects surrounding each shield-capable ship.

Stars: This alters the number of visible stars.

Lighting: This alters the lighting model used during missions. At the highest setting, all explosions and other effects use full static and dynamic lighting. At lower settings, less lighting is done, and on fewer objects.

Planets/Backgrounds: This toggles the backgrounds and planets on or off.

Target View Rendering: When on, this displays a 3D view of your current target in the Target View gauge. If you do not use this gauge much, turning this off causes a small improvement to framerate.

Weapon Extras: This enables (or disables) the missile trails and laser glows in the game.

At the top and bottom of the Detail Options screen are the buttons that take you to the Options, Multi, Control Config, and HUD Config sub-screens. As in the main Options screen, the Exit button takes you out of FreeSpace 2 and the Accept button puts you back into the game.

CONTROL CONFIG

This screen enables you to customize your controls setup and change your key bindings.

> ***NOTE:*** *Settings found in the Control Config screen are stored in your pilot's file, so you may have different control setups for different pilots. If you wish to take your pilot to another computer that has FreeSpace 2 installed, simply copy your pilot file to a diskette and take it with you. Your pilot files end with .PLR filename extensions and can be found in your \FreeSpace2\players\ directory.*

Control functions are divided into four categories:

Targeting: All targeting-related functions

Ship: Flight controls and other ship functions

Weapons: Weapon control functions, including countermeasures

Misc.: Other functions, such as wingman command shortcuts, energy management, and multiplayer messaging

Each category contains a list of functions to the left and the current key or controller bindings to the right. For the Targeting and Misc. categories, use the scroll arrows or slider to the far right, as those lists are too long to fit on a single screen.

> ***TIP:*** *There are many different targeting functions available to you under Control Config/Targeting. Many of these are not covered in the training missions. Once you have some combat experience under your belt, you may wish to try some of the more advanced targeting controls. Check through the Targeting list to see all the functions available.*

Bindings

To change the binding for a given function, simply double-click on the function to enter Bind Mode. With Bind Mode on, press the new key or controller button you want to assign to that function. (You may press the "Undo" button to undo your last binding.)

Each function can have one keyboard key and one joystick button bound to it at the same time.

You can also use the "Alt" and "Shift" buttons to the lower left to assign Alt and/or Shift modifiers to your selected binding.

Clearing Bindings

If you wish to clear the bindings for a given function, simply use your mouse to select that line and press "Clear Selected." All key and controller bindings are then removed for that item. Pressing "Clear All" removes all bindings for the current category.

Conflicts

If you assign a key or controller button that is already assigned to another function, a "Conflict" warning flashes at the bottom of the screen. The conflicting keys are shown in red. If the duplicate binding appears in another category, that category button is shown in red at the top of the screen.

You must resolve all conflicts before leaving the Control Config screen.

If you press the "Clear Conflict" button, the older binding is removed and the current one takes effect.

Clicking the "Accept" button saves your changes to the Control Config and takes you back to Options.

HUD CONFIG

This screen enables you to customize various aspects of your fighter's Heads-Up Display (HUD). For detailed information on the HUD gauges and how they work in the game, please see page 30.

Most of the screen is taken up by an image containing all the HUD's gauges and indicators.

To the upper left of the screen are sliders that control the relative intensities of the RGB (Red, Green, Blue) values of a particular gauge (click on a gauge in the HUD and adjust its color with the sliders).

The "I" Slider controls how distinctly the HUD shows up against the game's backgrounds.

At the bottom middle of the screen are three buttons that set the general HUD color scheme as either Amber, Blue, or Green.

To the lower left of the screen are three buttons labeled "On," "Off," and "Popup." Each gauge or indicator on the HUD display can be set to "On" or "Off." Simply click on that gauge or indicator and choose its new mode using the buttons in the lower left.

When set to "Off," a gauge or indicator is drawn in gray on this screen (it won't appear at all on the in-game screens). Otherwise, it displays in either the general HUD color you select or its own custom color, if you assigned one to it with the RGB sliders.

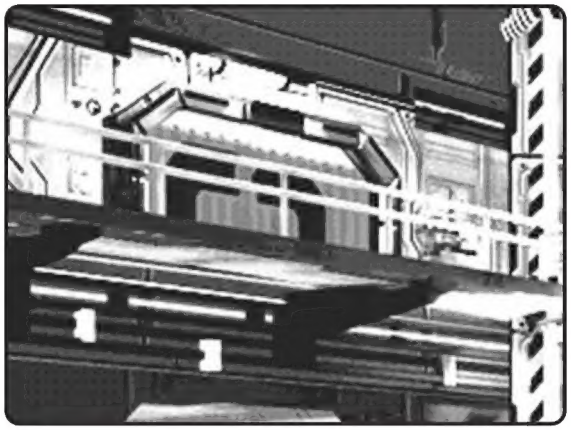
Many gauges enable you to set a third mode, called "Popup." In Popup mode, the gauge appears onscreen only when its status changes. If no further change occurs, it disappears within a few seconds.

For example: If you set the Weapons Display to Popup mode, it appears only when you change your armed or linked weapons. It remains onscreen for a short time, then disappears, unless you make additional changes.

The "Select All" button at the bottom enables you to select all gauges whose color does not change with your target. You can then change colors or settings for a large number of gauges all at once.

When you have the HUD configured the way you'd like, you can save the configuration by clicking on the text box under "Save" and typing in a name. Then click on the down arrow to the left of the box. If you have more than one saved configuration, you can use the left and right arrows beneath the text box to cycle through them.

In the lower right are buttons for Resetting to the defaults or Accepting your changes (and returning to the Options screen).



BARRACKS

You can manage your FreeSpace 2 pilots in the Barracks screen. From here, you can create and delete pilots, as well as view their combat statistics and medals.

In the upper left is a list of pilots. If this is your first time playing FreeSpace 2, only one pilot is listed.

If multiple pilots are displayed, you may change your current pilot by highlighting the name and clicking the "Select" button.

> ***NOTE:*** *Single-player pilots are stored separately from multiplayer pilots. Use the "Single" and "Multi" buttons in the upper right of the pilot list to change the type of pilot displayed. By leaving the Barracks with a multiplayer pilot selected, the game is placed in multiplayer mode (see page 46 for details).*

There are four buttons beneath the list of pilots:

Create: This creates a new pilot. This pilot is either single-player or multiplayer, depending on which mode is currently active.

Clone: This duplicates your currently selected pilot and prompts you for a new name (pilot names must be unique). This cloned pilot has all the same Control Config settings as the original pilot.

Remove: This deletes the selected pilot. If you delete the only

pilot in a given player mode, you must create another before leaving the Barracks.

Convert: This copies the current pilot but places the new pilot in the opposite player mode (Single or Multi). Example: If you Convert a single-player pilot, this creates a multiplayer version, complete with the same Control Config and Option settings.

> ***NOTE:*** *Clone and Convert do not copy your pilot's statistics, only the Options and Control settings. Please see "Statistics" (following section) for more info.*

In the upper right of the Barracks screen is the picture associated with the currently selected pilot. You can change your pilot's picture with the arrow buttons beneath the images. Each newly created pilot is randomly assigned a picture.

FreeSpace 2 allows you to import your own pilot pictures! Create a 256-color PCX image at 160x120 resolution and place it in the **\FreeSpace2\data\players\images** directory. It will appear in the Barracks the next time you run FreeSpace 2.

You can also make your own squadron insignia, but only for multiplayer pilots. Create a 256-color PCX image at 128x128 resolution and place it in the **\FreeSpace2\data\players\squads** directory. Your new insignia will appear in the Barracks the next time you run FreeSpace 2.

In multiplayer games, your pilot's picture and squadron insignia are automatically uploaded to the other players who fly missions with you.

STATISTICS

In the center of the Barracks screen is a section devoted to your pilot's stats. These are an ongoing record of your performance while using that pilot.

> ***NOTE:*** *Permanent statistics are kept only for Campaign missions. If you fly a mission in the Tech Room Simulator, you receive a statistics report at Debriefing, but your pilot's all-time statistics do not change.*

The statistics are self-explanatory, with these possible exceptions:

Kills: When a hostile ship is destroyed, the ship that inflicts the most damage to it gets credit for the kill, as long as that ship causes at least 20% of the total damage. If no single ship inflicts more than 20% damage to a hostile ship, no one receives the kill.

Assists: You receive an assist for inflicting 15% or more damage to any ship that is destroyed. Thus several different players may receive an assist for the same downed enemy craft.

You do not get kills or assists for destroying asteroids and other non-combative targets.

MEDALS

In your tours of duty as a GTVA Pilot, you are occasionally granted medals for outstanding achievements. The Medals screen is reached by clicking on the "Medals" button near the bottom of the Barracks screen. This shows your currently selected pilot's accumulated service medals. You see the name of a granted medal when you place the cursor over it.

Some medals are granted for superior dogfighting skills. Others are granted for exceptional performances in certain combat situations. It takes an extraordinarily skilled pilot to acquire every GTVA service medal.

Each new pilot begins at Ensign rank. During the course of a Campaign, as your pilot's skills improve, he will be periodically promoted and granted more responsibility. Eventually, your pilot will have full control over his flight wings' ships and weapon loadouts. The rank section of the Medals screen displays your pilot's current rank symbol.

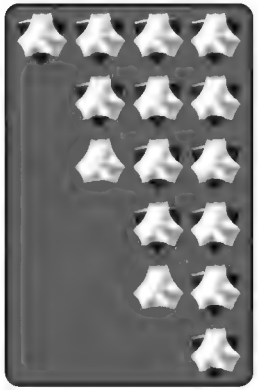
GTVA ranks are as follows:

Admiral

Vice Admiral

Rear Admiral

Commodore



Captain

Commander

Lieutenant Commander

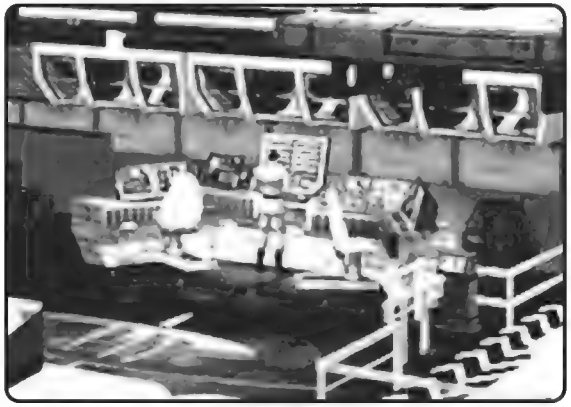
Lieutenant

Lieutenant Junior Grade

Ensign

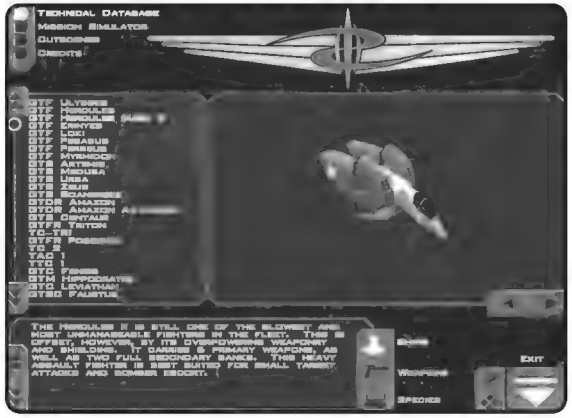
TECH ROOM

In the Tech Room, you can view Database information, fly missions in the Simulator, view previously seen cutscenes, and see the list of game credits.



TECHNICAL DATABASE

The Technical Database sub-screen gives information on the ships, weapons, species, and history of FreeSpace 2. Click on the buttons toward the bottom of the screen to view the various databases of information. For the Ships and Weapons databases, use the scroll bars on the left side of the screen to see the range of topics available. To peruse the Intelligence database, use the left and right arrow buttons on the right side of the screen.



MISSION SIMULATOR

The Mission Simulator enables you to replay single missions that you have completed during your Campaign.

Simply choose the mission you wish to replay from the displayed list and click on the "Commit" button.

Two filters at the bottom enable you to switch between stand-alone missions and Campaign missions that have been previously flown by your current pilot.

> ***NOTE:*** *Replaying a Campaign mission in this manner does not replace the result you achieved while playing it in Campaign mode. This is only a simulation. Once you have accepted a mission's outcome in Campaign mode, you cannot change the results unless you restart the Campaign.*

The Mission Simulator also enables you to fly single missions that are not part of a Campaign. These may be add-on missions from Volition, Inc., or home-brewed missions you or your friends made using FRED2, the FreeSpace 2 mission editor. In order for such missions to appear on this screen, they must be placed in your **FreeSpace2\data\missions** subdirectory.

VIEW CUTSCENES

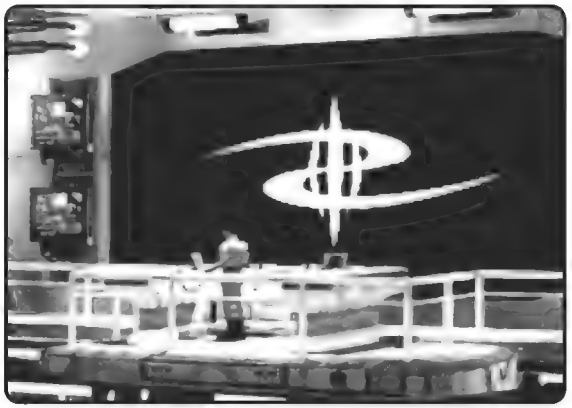
This screen enables you to view cutscenes you have seen previously while playing a FreeSpace 2 Campaign. Your current pilot must have seen a cutscene during Campaign play for it to appear on this list.

CREDITS

This screen lists the people (and organizations) who contributed to the development of FreeSpace 2.

CAMPAIGN ROOM

FreeSpace 2 missions are generally arranged into Campaigns. Each Campaign connects missions into a series in which the story progresses as the player proceeds from one mission to the next.



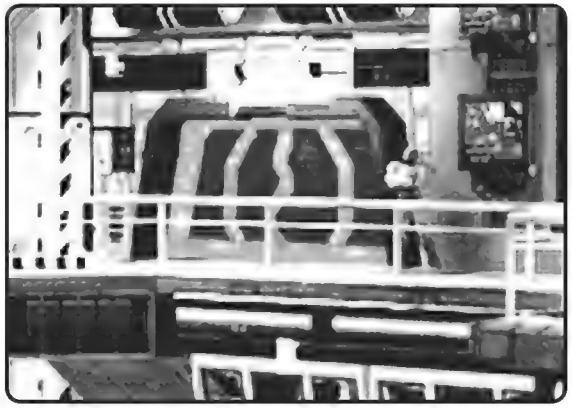
Each single-player FreeSpace 2 pilot you create can have only one Campaign in progress (or "open") at a time. Between Campaign missions, progress in a Campaign is automatically saved, and you may continue it later by returning to the Ready Room.

WARNING: *If you choose to restart or change a pilot's Campaign before his current one is completed, he loses all progress and statistics achieved during that Campaign. Only when a Campaign is completed, from start to finish, do your pilot's accumulated statistics, promotions, and medals become permanent.*

The default Campaign when you first install FreeSpace 2 is called "FreeSpace 2." More Campaigns appear here if you have created your own using FRED2 (the FreeSpace 2 mission editor), or if you have downloaded others from the Internet.

READY ROOM

Entering the Ready Room with a single-player pilot takes you to the Briefing for the next mission in that pilot's current Campaign. Entering the Ready Room with a multiplayer pilot yields something very different; see page 47 for more info.



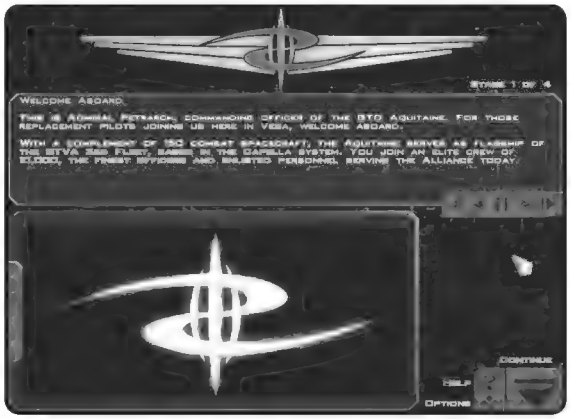
GAME MISSIONS

Playing missions is what FreeSpace 2 is all about. To help you get the most out of the game, each mission is preceded by a briefing and followed by a debriefing. The briefing tells you about the upcoming mission and how it fits into the Big Picture, while the debriefing gives you feedback on your performance and what it means to the war effort.

COMMAND BRIEFING

Before certain missions, you receive a Command Briefing from your base ship's commander. This briefing is given to all pilots stationed on your ship. It provides an overview of the war, outlining fleet movements, recent engagements, and discussing any new technologies that have been put into service recently.

Command Briefings are typically divided into several stages. Use the stage arrows beneath the briefing text to advance through and review all stages.

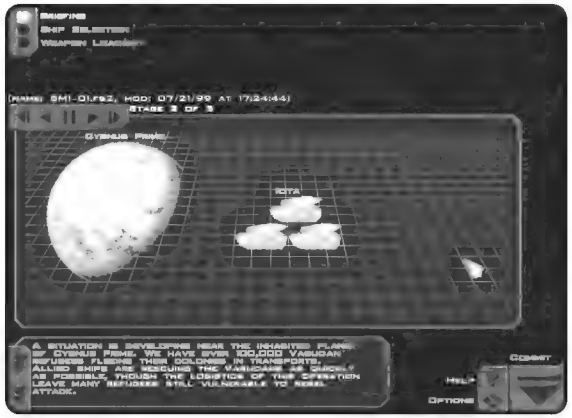


MISSION BRIEFING

The Mission Briefing screen displays your mission orders and an overview of your objectives. In the upper left you see buttons for Briefing (currently highlighted), Ship Selection, and Weapon Loadout. If you are playing a training mission, Briefing is the only available choice.

As with Command Briefings, Mission Briefings are divided into several stages. Each stage typically focuses on one task expected of you during the mission. Use the stage arrows above the text box to review all stages.

In each stage, you see a graphical, icon-based representation of what GTVA Command expects you to encounter in the mission. You may use your mouse to click on any of the icons to see a detailed view of that ship or object.



At the bottom of the screen, you see your briefing instructions for the current stage. Your commanding officer also reads aloud the instructions to you (unless you turned off the voice in the Options screen). FreeSpace 2 missions can become quite involved, so be sure to review all briefing stages before moving on.

The last stage in every briefing is the list of Mission Objectives. These are the objectives you are expected to meet by mission's end.

Primary Objectives are vital to the mission. Meeting all primary objectives is generally critical to mission success. Failing to meet a primary objective means you may be forced to re-fly the mission before advancing to the next.

Secondary Objectives are important but not critical. If you fail to meet a secondary objective, the mission may not be considered a total success, but you are usually allowed to advance to the next mission.

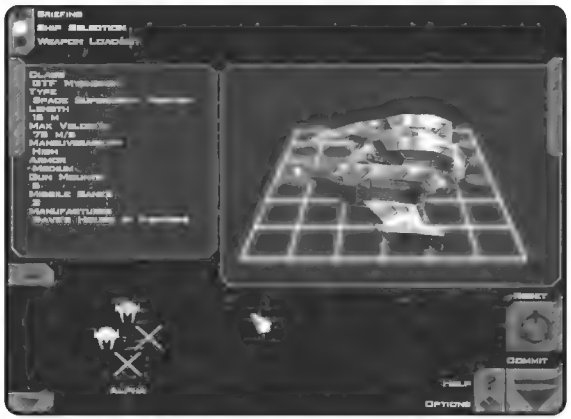
Bonus Objectives result from unforeseen events that occur during a mission. Thus you will never see a bonus objective in your Briefing. For example, an enemy cruiser arrives unexpectedly, but you and your wingmen manage to destroy it. Since Command did not expect this ship, you were not briefed on it. However, once it arrived and you dealt with it, you were awarded a successful bonus objective for destroying it.

Once you have reviewed all Briefing stages, proceed to Ship Selection (not available in training missions).

SHIP SELECTION

This screen enables pilots to select the ships best suited for the mission at hand. At the start of the main FreeSpace 2 Campaign, you do not have enough experience to dictate the ships your wingmen use. As you advance through the Campaign, however, you rise in rank and are given more options on this screen, as well as on the Weapon Loadout screen.

> ***NOTE:*** *Ship selection is handled differently in multiplayer missions. For more information, please see page 56.*



At the bottom of the screen is an arrangement of flight wings. As a single-player pilot, you are always a member of Alpha wing, which is shown on the left. You are also always flying "point" for Alpha wing, which is the topmost icon in that group, drawn in orange.

In addition to Alpha, you may also see wing groupings for Beta and Gamma. Alpha, Beta, and Gamma make up your primary fighter force in FreeSpace 2 missions. Depending on the needs of the mission, you may also be joined by more wings, typically designated Delta, Epsilon, and so on. However, Alpha, Beta, and Gamma are the only wings over which you have Ship Selection and Weapon Loadout control.

The wing groupings and ship slots at the bottom use the following symbols:

Ship icons: These represent the ship class currently assigned to that slot. Each ship class has a different top-down view symbol. If a ship symbol is present in a wing slot, that ship class will be deployed there. Any ship may be replaced by any available ship class.

Closed icon: This wing slot cannot be filled in this mission.

Open icon: This shows an available wing slot that is currently unfilled.

Above the wing display is a rotating view of the currently chosen ship class, with a description of its properties and flight statistics. By left-clicking on a different ship icon below, you can see the properties for that ship class.

In the lower left corner is the Ship Pool. This contains a scrolling list of the ship classes available for this mission, along with an inventory count for each. This count represents how many ships of each class are available, not including ships already placed in wings.

You can use your left mouse button to drag-and-drop ships from the Ship Pool onto the available wing slots. If you drop a new icon onto a placed ship icon, the original ship returns to the Ship Pool. The newly placed ship's inventory count drops by one, while the displaced ship's count increases by one.

Modifying the Ship Selection for a mission often isn't necessary. Allied Command typically gives good default wing layouts for the tasks at hand. All missions may be completed with the default ships. However, as you become more familiar with the different craft in FreeSpace 2, you may favor some ship classes over others.

Ship Selection enables you to outfit your forces the way you want.

If you wish to reset the wing layouts to the mission defaults, simply click the "Reset" button to the lower right.

When you have completed Ship Selection, you may move to the Weapon Loadout screen or click on the "Commit" button to begin the mission.

WEAPON LOADOUT

The Weapon Loadout screen enables you to modify the default weapons carried by your ship. Depending on your rank, you may also be allowed to change your wingmen's weapon loadouts.

> ***NOTE:*** *The Weapon Loadout screen functions differently in multiplayer mode. Please see page 56 for details.*

The left side of the screen shows two Weapon Pools. The top pool presents the available Primary weapons (cannon/energy-based), while the bottom contains Secondary weapons (missiles and bombs). To the left of each weapon icon is its inventory count.

The center of the screen contains a top-down view of the currently selected ship. Next to this are slots for each Primary and Secondary weapon bank available on that ship class. To look at the loadout for another ship, left-click on one of the ship icons in the wing layout at the bottom.

To the right of the ship diagram, each Secondary weapon icon has a number displayed. This is the number of missiles of that type the ship is currently carrying. Ship classes all have different missile bank capacities, and each type of missile takes up a different amount of space within a bank.

On the right side of the screen is a diagram and description of the currently selected weapon. For Primary weapons, this gives the energy usage and damage the weapon causes (higher levels are better). For Secondary weapons, this tells the type of missile or bomb (dumbfire, heat-seeking, etc.). To view another weapon's description, left-click on a different weapon icon.

To change the weapon currently armed on the selected ship, simply drag-and-drop the new icon onto the desired bank next to the ship overview. When you drop it onto a placed weapon, the original is returned to the Weapon Pool and the inventory count of each weapon is adjusted accordingly.

> ***NOTE:*** *Each ship class has its own weapon capacity and compatibility. If the selected ship cannot be outfitted with a certain weapon, that weapon icon appears gray in the Weapon Pools.*

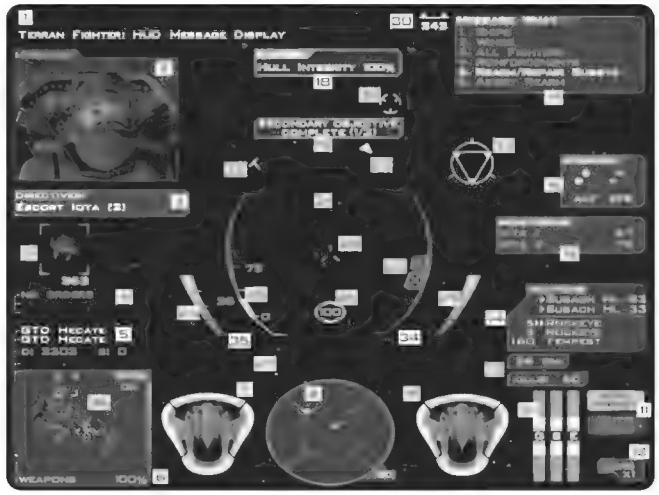
Modifying your weapon loadout is not necessary to complete the upcoming mission. Each ship class has a good default weapon loadout. This screen simply enables you to fine-tune the loadout as you see fit.

When you have completed your changes in Weapon Loadout, click "Commit" to enter the mission.

IN-GAME SCREENS

THE HUD (HEADS-UP DISPLAY)

This is the main game screen for FreeSpace 2, the screen you see during all the action. Though it may seem like a daunting amount of information, the more you learn about the HUD, the better you'll play. Also, any of these gauges and displays may be turned on or off in the Options/HUD Config screen.



1. **Message Display -** Incoming messages appear here. Messages can be from wingmen, Allied Command, or any other ship in the mission.
2. **Message Video -** This displays a visual of the person transmitting the incoming message.
3. **Directives Display -** Mission directives appear here. Directives are similar to Objectives, but are broken down into smaller goals. When given a directive to destroy an enemy fighter wing (i.e., "Destroy Aries [3]"), the number following the wing name indicates how many ships are left in that wing.
4. **Additional Target Info -** This shows the current orders given to the targeted ship. The "Time-To" field is used only for docking and waypoint maneuvers.

5. **Target Info -** The first two text lines display your target's name, wing name, and ship class. The third line displays its distance and speed.
6. **Target View -** This shows a real-time view of your target. In the upper right are your target's Hull Integrity and Status. The three possible status abbreviations are "OK" (OK), "DMG" (below 90% Hull Integrity), and "CRT" (critical).

   Along the right side of this frame is a vertical bar that graphically depicts your target's Hull Integrity.

   If you have a subsystem targeted, its name appears at the bottom of the Target View, next to its integrity value. If your target is Disabled (because of a destroyed Engine subsystem), the word "Disabled" appears below the Target View as well.
7. **Target Overhead -** This 2D view displays a top-down view of any fighter or bomber target. If your target is equipped with energy shields, a four-quadrant shield strength display surrounds the ship diagram. Full-strength shields glow brightly, gradually becoming dimmer as they suffer damage.

   The shield quadrants and hull diagram also flash briefly when suffering damage.
8. **Radar Gauge -** This circular display shows targeting "blips" for all ships and objects that can be detected in the battle area. It's a full 360-degree view of your surroundings. Blips in the inner circle are in your forward hemisphere. If your target is in the exact center of the radar, it is directly in front of you. The outer ring represents your rear hemisphere. Target blips on the very edge of the radar are directly behind you.

   Hostile targets are shown in red, friendly in green, and unknown/neutral in gray. Ships that are just arriving or departing through subspace are shown briefly as blue blips, as are unusual objects in the mission. Your current target's blip is always displayed larger than the others. Additionally, contacts that are farther away than 1,500 meters are shown in a dimmer color.

   Your Radar can be set for different ranges by pressing the apostrophe (') key. Any target beyond the currently set range is not displayed on the Radar Gauge. Your current range setting is shown to the lower right of this gauge.

9. **Ship Overhead -** This displays the shield and hull information for your ship.
10. **ETS Display -** These bars indicate the current power settings for your ship's Energy Transfer System. Vertical bars show the power output to your ship's Guns (G), Engine (E), and Shields (S).
11. **Auto Target/Auto Speed Toggles -** These two indicators show the current on/off status for your Auto-Targeting and Auto-Speed Matching.
12. **Time Display -** Shown here is the total elapsed mission time, as well as the current time compression setting (1X, 2X, or 4X).
13. **Countermeasures / Kills Displays -** The "CM" gauge shows how many countermeasures you have remaining. "Kills" counts the number of ships for which you have received a Kill in the current mission.
14. **Weapons Display -** The top half of this gauge shows the arming status of your Primary weapons. The arrow icon to the left of the weapon name indicates that it is armed. If you have two Primary banks linked together, both show an arrow icon.

    The bottom half of this gauge shows your Secondary arming status and missile count(s). Your currently selected Secondary bank has an arrow icon to the left of it. If you have that bank set to dual-fire mode, two arrow icons are shown.
15. **Monitor/Escort Display -** The Monitor Display enables you to keep an eye on the hull integrities of certain ships vital to the current mission. If a ship appearing in this display is suffering damage, its entry flashes briefly. If the ship becomes disabled, a "D" icon appears to the left of its name.

    Up to three ships may be monitored simultaneously. Consult the Reference Card for keys used to move ships on and off the Monitor Display.
16. **Wingman Status -** Use this display to keep tabs on your wingmen. Each friendly wing present in a mission is represented by a group of dots labeled with the wing's name.

    Each ship dot can be in one of four states:

    - ***Full Green:*** Ship present, hull integrity above 50%
    - ***Full Red:*** Ship present, hull integrity below 50%

    - ***Hollow Green:*** Ship has departed area
    - ***Hollow Red:*** Ship has been destroyed

    If a wingman is taking damage, his dot flashes briefly. The only wings supported by this gauge are Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon.
17. **Comm Menu -** This menu displays your messaging options. Hit the "C" key to open the menu and then choose the number corresponding to the desired order or target.
18. **Damage Display -** This shows any subsystem damage you have suffered to your ship, including overall Hull Integrity. Unless a non-hull subsystem is at 0% (destroyed), it slowly repairs itself. Support ships may also be used to repair damaged or destroyed subsystems.
19. **Objective Notifier -** This indicator appears when a Primary, Secondary, or Bonus objective is resolved (it's either been met or failed). A number following the text indicates how many objectives of that type have been resolved. For example, if the gauge displays "Primary Objective Complete (1/2)," that means you have resolved one of two Primary objectives.
20. **Threat Indicators -** The circular indicator flashes when a hostile ship is firing Primary or laser weapons at your ship. The crosshair indicator flashes when a hostile ship is attempting to gain missile lock on you (a low-pitched warning sound accompanies this).
21. **Missile/Collision Warnings -** The "Launch" indicator appears when a locked missile has been launched at your ship. If you use countermeasures to evade the missile, this may change briefly to "Evaded." The "Collision" indicator flashes briefly if you suffer damage as a result of a ship-to-ship collision. It also displays "Blast" if you receive damage from being too close to an explosion. There are other conditions that trigger warnings in this area, as you'll discover during the Campaign.
22. **Aspect Angle -** This T-shaped indicator graphically shows the aspect angle of your current target. If the indicator is in the top half of the orbit circle, your target is facing toward you. If it is in the bottom half of the orbit, your target is facing away from you (with 12 o'clock and 6 o'clock facing directly at you and away from you, respectively). This information is very useful when attempting to fire heat- or aspect-seeking

missiles. Waiting until this indicator is in the bottom half of the orbit before launching your missiles gives you a better chance for a hit.

23. **Direction to Target -** This triangle points off-screen toward your target, indicating the direction to turn to bring it on-screen the fastest.
24. **Afterburner Energy -** This shows the energy level in your afterburner reserve.
25. **Throttle Indicator -** This gauge displays your throttle and current speed data. The number at the top right indicates your current top speed at full throttle. This number may change based on your ETS (Energy Transfer System) settings. The number to the left of the bar indicates your current speed. If you have speed matching (or auto-speed matching) turned on, there is a small "M" icon next to this number.
26. **Mini-Target Display -** The number indicates your current target's Hull Integrity. If your target has shields, there are four small shield quadrants around the number. Functionally, this is the same as the Target Overhead display.
27. **Support Status -** If you call for rearming/repair, this shows the current status of the support ship. If this gauge shows "Busy," the support ship is currently rearming another friendly fighter. Otherwise, this shows the estimated time-to-dock, based on your current position and speed.
28. **Crosshairs -** This shows the aiming point for your Primary weapons.
29. **Primary Energy Reserve -** This is a graphical indication of your current Primary weapons energy bank. When this reserve is depleted, you cannot fire Primary weapons until they regain energy. If you have the "G" portion of your ETS system set to zero, this reserve does not recharge.
30. **Off-screen Target -** This shows the direction and distance to your current target when it's off-screen. The two triangle-halves grow farther apart the farther off-screen your target is. The number indicates the physical distance in meters to your target.
31. **Target Brackets -** Indicates your current target. The number in the corner indicates the physical distance between you to the target.

32. **Lead Indicators -** These indicators show where you should fire your weapons in order to correctly "lead" your target. Note that this is based on the target's current flight speed and trajectory, and does not guarantee a hit. The inner crosshairs appear only if you are within firing range of your currently armed Secondary weapons. Likewise, the outer circle displays when the target is within range of your currently armed Primaries.
33. **Aspect Triangle -** This indicator appears when you are trying to gain target lock with an aspect-seeking missile (such as the Hornet or Tsunami). The closer this rotating triangle comes to your target on-screen, the closer you are to achieving lock. Once lock is achieved, the triangle stops rotating and is surrounded by a flashing circle.
34. **Direction to Threat -** This hollow red triangle indicates the current off-screen direction to a ship that is attacking you. You may see several of these at a time.
35. **Direction to Missile -** This yellow triangle appears when a missile is incoming. The indicator's position shows the direction to the missile's off-screen location. The line protruding from this gives a graphical representation of its distance from you. The longer the line, the farther away it is.
36. **Subsystem Targeting Bracket -** This indicates the position of your currently targeted subsystem. If the subsystem is on the side of the ship facing you, it is just a square bracket. If the subsystem is on the far side of the targeted ship, the bracket has an "X" inside it. Faded indicators are displayed for destroyed subsystems.

MESSAGES

The in-game Comm Menu is one of the most powerful features of FreeSpace 2. With it, you can order wingmen to do numerous tasks, request reinforcements, and call for rearming and repair.

> ***NOTE:*** *In early missions, you don't have the authority to issue certain orders. Also, there are some ships and wings to which you cannot issue orders.*

The menu is context-sensitive and displays only the choices that are currently available to you.

RECIPIENT

The first level of options lets you pick the message recipient(s). Your choices at this level are as follows:

1. *Ships* - send a message to a specific ship.
2. *Wings* - send a message to an entire wing (Alpha, Beta, etc.).
3. *All Fighters* - send to every friendly fighter and bomber in the battle.
4. *Reinforcements* - call in reinforcement wings, if available. Once they have arrived, they may be sent messages using options 1-3.
5. *Rearm/Repair Subsys* - call for a Support ship, if one is available. See the "Rearming & Repairing" section (following this section) for details.
6. *Abort Rearm* - cancels a Rearm/Repair request.

If an option is faded in this menu, then it is not a valid choice at the moment. If you have a full load of missiles and no subsystem damage, for example, you cannot call in a support ship for Rearm/Repair.

SELECT SHIP OR WING

If you chose option 1 or 2, you are given a list of ships or wings available to contact. After choosing the ship or wing, you proceed to the next level of the Comm Menu, in which you choose your message. If you chose option 3 (All Fighters), you go directly to choosing which message to send.

If you often find yourself wishing to direct orders to multiple ships that don't belong to the same wing, you may want to familiarize yourself with the Hotkey system. See page 44 for details on Hotkeys.

SEND THE MESSAGE

Once you have chosen the recipients of your upcoming message, the next Comm Menu level shows the orders you're allowed to give.

> ***NOTE:*** *This menu level does not appear if you used one of the shortcut keys (Shift-A for "Attack my Target," Shift-W for "Form on my Wing," etc.). Simply choosing the target of the order in the previous menu is enough.*

Depending on the situation, one or more of the following orders are available:

- **Destroy my target -** This orders the message recipients to attack the ship you have targeted.
- **Disable my target -** This orders the recipients to disable your targeted ship by destroying its Engine subsystem(s).
- **Disarm my target -** This orders the recipients to remove the offensive capabilities of your target. They first attempt to destroy its Weapons subsystem, making its defensive fire much less accurate. Then they try to take out all turrets and missile launchers. The target of this order must be a large freighter, cruiser, or capital ship.
- **Destroy subsystem -** This orders the recipients to knock out the subsystem you currently have targeted on a hostile ship. Once this subsystem has been destroyed, the recipients cease fire until issued another order.
- **Protect my target -** Ships issued a protect order attempt to guard your targeted ship. If hostile ships attack or otherwise threaten that ship, ships ordered to protect it engage them.
- **Ignore my target -** This orders all friendly ships to ignore your target. Note that this is not a ship-specific order; regardless of who receives this order, all friendlies will ignore that target.
- **Form on my wing -** This orders the recipients to form around your ship and to stop pursuing their previous orders.
- **Cover me -** Ships issued this order engage any ships attacking you.
- **Engage enemy -** This is essentially the opposite of the "form on my wing" order. Use this to give the recipients permission to engage any and all hostiles in the battle area.
- **Depart -** This orders the recipients to activate their subspace drives and leave the battle area. Once a ship has departed, it may not be recalled.

> ***NOTE:*** *Wingmen in FreeSpace 2 have a keen sense of self-preservation. Regardless of their standing orders, if they are attacked or otherwise threatened sufficiently, they will turn on their attacker. If they destroy the attacker, or determine it is no longer a threat, they will then resume their standing orders.*

REARMING & REPAIRING

In many missions you may run out of missiles or receive serious subsystem damage to your ship. Allied Command often has a support ship fueled up and ready to assist you and your squadmates.

In-flight rearming and repairing in FreeSpace 2 is a simple matter. Once you have requested Rearm/Repair (either through the SHIFT-R shortcut, or the "C" Comm Menu), a support ship quickly enters the battle area via subspace. If a support ship is already in the battle area, it notes your request.

When it has finished docking with any wingmen who previously requested support, it heads toward your ship. The Support Status gauge gives you an estimated time to docking, based on your speed and the distance to the support ship. (If the gauge reads "Obstructed," that means its path to you is blocked by another ship. Move until the "Obstructed" warning goes away.)

As the ship approaches, drop your throttle to zero and wait. The support ship quickly maneuvers into position and docks with your ship. It then takes note of your systems status and begins replenishing your missile banks and energy reserves.

If any of your onboard subsystems have been damaged or destroyed, the support ship repairs or replaces them.

> ***NOTE:*** *Your fighter's Hull Integrity is a measure of the exterior armor's strength and damage level. While the support ship can repair damaged electronics subsystems, it can do nothing to repair damaged armor.*

Once the support procedures are complete, the support ship's pilot notifies you and disengages from your ship. You are also free to abort the Rearm/Repair procedure at any time, either by using the Comm Menu or by accelerating away from the support ship.

MISSILE FIRING

MISSILE TYPES

There are four types of missiles in FreeSpace 2: heat-seeking, aspect-seeking, dumbfire, and remote-activated.

A **heat-seeking missile** requires no lock time and may be launched as soon as your missile bank is ready to fire. The missile locates the nearest hostile target in its forward view cone and locks onto it. If the target leaves the missile's view cone, it tries to lock onto another hostile target.

An **aspect-seeking missile** does not lose lock if its target leaves the view cone. It turns to pursue the target until it makes contact or runs out of thrust. However, an aspect-seeking missile requires the pilot to gain aspect lock on the target before launching.

Gaining aspect lock can be difficult if your target is highly maneuverable. If you have an aspect-seeking missile, such as the Hornet or Interceptor, the "aspect triangle" on the HUD appears on-screen. As the target moves around your forward viewscreen, the aspect triangle follows, attempting to gain lock. Once the triangle is centered on the target, lock is achieved.

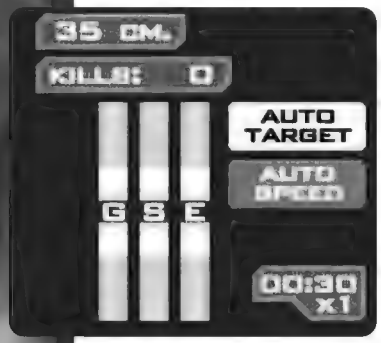
A **dumbfire missile** travels in a straight line from the point of release. Fire these either at short range or by using the lead indicator to aim the missiles.

A **remote-activated missile** fires onto a single target and is activated by pressing the Secondary weapon fire button a second time.

COUNTERMEASURES

All fighters and bombers are equipped with a set of specific missile countermeasures (default key binding is "X"). These are small electronic decoys designed to mimic the flight signatures of that ship. When dropped behind the ship, they attempt to fool incoming missiles into tracking them instead.

Countermeasures are most effective when the incoming missile is at close range. Unfortunately, if you wait too long to drop them, you risk sustaining damage from the missile blast. Practice is the key.



Your Countermeasure supply is displayed above the Kills counter.

Advanced aspect-seeking missiles are somewhat less susceptible to countermeasures than other missiles.

If you deplete your supply of countermeasures during a mission, you may call for Rearm/Repair and the support ship will replenish you.

Be aware that enemy ships are also equipped with countermeasures.

ADVANCED TARGETING

FreeSpace 2 features many different targeting controls, each with its own uses. As you become familiar with space combat, you may wish to learn more of the advanced targeting features.

One common control is Auto-Targeting (default binding is ALT-H). This is indicated in the lower right of your HUD. When Auto-Targeting is enabled, your ship's computer automatically targets the next closest hostile when the current one is destroyed. It also changes targets if the previous target leaves the battle area.

Using Auto-Targeting ensures that you always have a nearby hostile fighter in your sights.

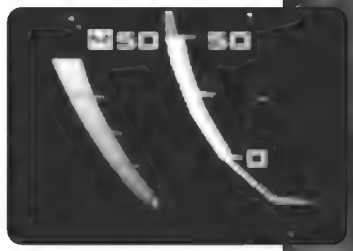
Other useful targeting controls include:

- Target next ship in reticle (default binding "Y")
- Target nearest hostile attacking your ship (default binding "R")
- Target next subsystem on targeted ship (default binding "S")
- Target next turret on targeted ship (default binding "K")

See the Reference Card for a full list of advanced targeting controls.

MATCHING SPEED

One of the most effective dogfighting techniques is to match speed with your target (default binding "M"). When speed matching is enabled, your fighter automatically adjusts its velocity to match that of your target. This is useful if you are engaging a slower fighter and do not wish to overshoot it.



The "M" icon indicates that you are matching speed with your current target.

The standard form of speed matching applies only to your current target. If you select a new target, speed matching turns off. If you wish speed matching to persist as you switch to new targets, use Auto-Speed Matching (default binding "ALT-M").

ENDING A MISSION

You may end a mission at any time by engaging your subspace drive (default binding "ALT-J"). This causes your ship to make a subspace jump back to your base of operations. Your subspace drive has a brief warm-up period, during which you can cancel the jump by hitting ESC.

Jumping out usually sends you into the mission's debriefing, at which time your performance is judged by how well you fulfilled the mission objectives at the time you jumped out. In most missions, you are informed when you are permitted to leave the battle area.

ENERGY TRANSFER SYSTEM (ETS)

Shield energy rate boosted, at the cost of Engine output and Guns/Energy Weapons recharging.

Your ship's reactor produces a certain amount of power every second. This power is directed to three primary subsystems: weapons, shields, and engines. The ETS enables you to change the amount of power directed to each subsystem, based on current need.

The ETS display is in the lower right of your HUD. The three bars represent the three areas of energy allocation (G for guns/energy weapons, S for shields, and E for engines).

With the default bindings, you may use the six keys found above the arrow keys on your keyboard (INSERT, HOME, PAGE UP increase energy directed to the respective system. DELETE, END, PAGE DOWN decrease energy) to control the energy allocation to each subsystem. You'll notice that increasing power to one subsystem causes the other two outputs to drop. The effects of this balance are described below:

Guns/Energy Weapons - The ETS level for guns determines how quickly your Primary weapon energy bank recharges. If ETS for guns is set to zero, it does not recharge at all. You can fire until your bank depletes, but it cannot receive more energy until you raise its ETS setting.

Shields - A high ETS setting for shields enables your four shield quadrants to recharge at a faster rate. The energy is distributed to the four quadrants evenly. If one or more quadrant is at full strength already, the energy is essentially lost, not re-routed elsewhere.

Engines - Maximizing power output to engines raises the top speed of your ship by 20-30%. The exact amount varies, depending on the ship's reactor capacity and engine. Similarly, decreasing the engine ETS setting below its default causes your engines to operate at below normal output, lowering your top speed by up to 30%.

> ***NOTE:*** *If a subsystem's energy reserve is at full capacity (full shield charge, for example), the energy directed to that subsystem is lost, not redirected to another subsystem. Therefore, if your ship has full shields, you may wish to drop the "S" ETS setting to move the extra energy to engines, for example.*

In addition to changing the proportions of reactor power distribution among the three subsystems, you may also shunt bursts of energy from shields to weapons and back again. The default bindings for these two controls are the following:

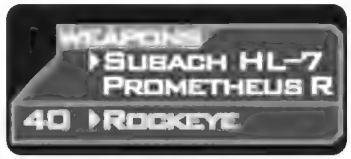
SHIFT + SCROLL LOCK - transfer energy from Shields to Primary weapons/guns

SCROLL LOCK - transfer energy from Primary weapons/guns to Shields

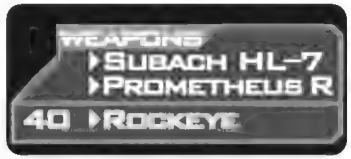
WEAPONS SELECTION & LINKING

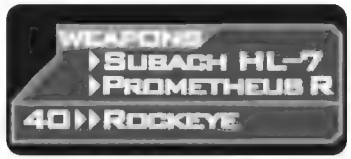
Many GTVA ships come equipped with multiple Primary and Secondary weapons banks. With Primary weapons, you have the option of arming one or both of the two possible banks. Arming only one bank is useful when firing weapons such as the Disruptor Cannon, which is designed to disable, but not destroy, a target.

In ships that carry two Primary banks, you may also arm both at once (default cycle key is "."). This is called linking. When you have two cannons linked, both fire together. However, because of the increased energy needs, they fire at a slightly slower rate than when only one is armed.



Primaries set to single- and linked-fire modes





Secondaries set to single- and dual-fire modes

Secondary weapon linking is done somewhat differently. Only one Secondary bank may be armed at a time, but you can set that bank to dual-fire mode (default binding "SHIFT-/"). This launches twice the number of missiles per burst than single-fire mode.

HOTKEYS

Hotkeys are one of the more advanced features of FreeSpace 2. They supplement the Comm Menu and provide greater flexibility to your wingman messaging.

Hotkeys may be assigned to the F5 - F12 keys on your keyboard. By default, F5 is assigned to Alpha wing, F6 to Beta, and F7 to Gamma.

HOTKEY USAGE

After issuing an order using shortcut keys, such as SHIFT-C or SHIFT-A, you can skip the Comm Menu and instead hit a defined Hotkey to direct that order to only those ships. The ships assigned to a hotkey may be one entire wing, members of several wings, individual ships, or any combination thereof.

For example, let's say Alpha and Beta wings consist of bombers, while Gamma wing contains fighters that are supposed to cover the bombers. If you used the Comm Menu, you could command all of Gamma wing, or you could give orders to each Gamma wing ship individually. If you wanted to make half of Gamma cover Alpha and the other half cover Beta, it would take many key presses.

However, if you assign Gamma 1 and 2 to the F9 hotkey, and Gamma 3 and 4 to F10, you could quickly direct Gamma to split and cover both Alpha and Beta wings. Or order two Gamma ships to cover Beta while the other two Gammas attack an enemy freighter.

Hotkeys grant you much greater flexibility in controlling the wingmen under your command. In tough battles, clever use of hotkeys can mean the difference between victory and defeat.

DEFINING HOTKEYS

Hitting F3 from any mission or pre-mission screen, including the game screen itself, will take you to Hotkey Assignment. This is where you change or add hotkey definitions.

The screen lists all currently known ships for the mission, divided into "Friendly" and "Hostile" groups. Each wing has a small triangle icon next to its name. Left-clicking on this icon expands the wing to show its individual ships.

To the left of each ship or wing name, you see the hotkey assigned to it (if any). Alpha wing is always assigned to F5 by default. Beta and Gamma are assigned to F6 and F7, if they are present in the mission.

Double-clicking on a ship or wing name adds or removes it from the currently selected hotkey. You may also use the "+" and "-" buttons.

The current hotkey is shown in the box to the upper right. To change it, simply press the corresponding function key (F5 through F12).

Note that a single ship or wing may be assigned to multiple hotkeys.

MULTIPLAYER FREESPACE 2

PARALLAX ONLINE (PXO)

FreeSpace 2 enables you to play with up to 12 other people over any network that supports TCP/IP or IPX.

Volition provides a **free** Internet game-tracking and statistic-keeping service called Parallax Online (at http://www.pxo.net). This service enables players all over the world to meet and play FreeSpace 2 games together. PXO also tracks statistics for all registered players.

MULTIPLAYER BASICS

There are several different multiplayer modes in FreeSpace 2: cooperative, team vs. team, and dogfight. (There is also SquadWar, a new, persistent game world in which teams of FS2 players battle for control of the galaxy; see the SquadWar section on page 63.) In cooperative games, all players fly on the same team, working together to achieve similar objectives. In team vs. team mode, up to four players on a side fly against each other, each team having its own set of objectives to achieve. In dogfight mode, it's every pilot for himself in a free-for-all where the goal is to rack up the highest number of kills.

Multiplayer games can take place as a single mission or a campaign. A multiplayer campaign has all the characteristics of a

single-player campaign, including multiple missions and mission branching.

FreeSpace 2 multiplayer games always have one server and one or more clients. The server of a multiplayer game is the machine that runs the game simulation for all other players (clients) in the game. Additionally, there is always one host of the game. In general, the host and the server of the game are the same. See the section on "Standalone (Dedicated) Servers" for more information on running a server that doesn't require a host; this is generally the way to go if you're playing with more than five people.

The speed of your multiplayer game depends on your connection speed to the game's server. Because the server sends almost all game-related information to clients, your connection speed dictates how fast your machine updates the game state. Your connection speed is measured in terms of "ping." The lower the ping, the faster your connection to the server.

> ***NOTE:*** *In order to be the server for a multiplayer game, you must have a fast connection to the Internet. It is recommended that you have at least a dual-channel ISDN line to run a game server.*

CREATING A PILOT

Before you can create or join a multiplayer game, you must first create a multiplayer pilot. You do this either from the Pilot Selection screen (the screen that appears after you click "Play" on the FS2 Launcher) or in the Barracks room. See the "Barracks" section on page 17 for more details.

JOINING A GAME

Once you have created and selected a multiplayer pilot, you can enter the Ready Room to join a game.

The Games screen lists all the active games your computer can find. Each line in the screen contains the status of the game (forming, briefing, playing, etc), the server's connection to the Internet, the type of game being played (cooperative, team vs. team, dogfight), the name of the game, the number of players, and the ping time to the server. Players may join games only during the Forming stage.

The type of game is represented by the following icons:

Cooperative

Dogfight

Team vs. Team

The status of the game is one of the following:

- ***Forming*** - The game has not yet started. Depending on game options, a player may be able to join during this stage.
- ***Briefing*** - The game has entered the briefing stage, in which players get their objectives and select their ships and weapons. A player may not join a game in this stage.
- ***Playing*** - The mission is currently being flown. A player may not join a game in this stage.
- ***Paused*** - The mission is currently paused. A player may not join a game in this stage.
- ***Debriefing*** - All players are in the debriefing stage. A player may not join a game during this stage.

When you find a game that you wish to join, double-click on the game or highlight the game and hit the "Join" button. If you try to join a game that is not accepting players, or is in a stage in which players cannot join, you see a dialog box to this effect.

Once you have joined a game, you are placed in the following screen:

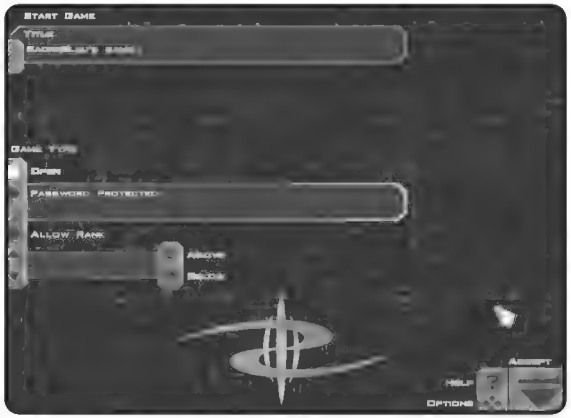
This screen shows the other players currently in the game, the name and description of the mission selected by the game's host, and a large chat window.

When the selected mission is a team vs. team mission, all players have red or green team icons to the left of their names. Any player may choose a team by highlighting his pilot name and selecting one of the two team buttons under the pilot listing. However, the game's host may choose to reassign that player to another team. If the host changes the player to a new team, the player may no longer select his own team.

Once the host starts the game, all players automatically move into the briefing stage.

STARTING A NEW GAME

If you wish to start your own game, click on the "Create Game" button on the Games screen. Once you click this button, you see the following screen:



You may pick a name for your game. You also have several ways to restrict who can join your game. The following is a list of options that you can choose:

- ***Open Game*** - In an open multiplayer game, any player may join your game during the forming stage.
- ***Password Protected*** - You can assign a password to your game. A player may join your game only if he knows the password.
- ***Allow Rank*** - You can further restrict your game to allow only players above or below a certain rank. Any player who tries to join and does not meet the rank criteria is rejected.

Once you have selected your name and the join methods you wish to allow, click on the "Accept" button.

HOST SETUP

You are now in the Host Setup screen. From here, you may select which mission or campaign to play, choose teams for team vs. team missions, and select the game options for the game you are starting.

The mission/campaign selection area enables you to choose the mission or campaign you wish to fly. Select the "Missions" button to display the available multiplayer missions, or the "Campaigns" button to display all available multiplayer campaigns. Additionally, you can use the filter buttons along the top of this display to narrow down your choices to a particular type of multiplayer game or campaign.

The player list area shows the players who have currently joined your game. You may use the buttons on this box as follows:

- ***Kick*** - Pressing this button kicks the selected player from the game.
- ***Close*** - While this button is active, no other players may join your game. Once you leave the Host Setup screen, players may once again join, if the restrictions allow.
- ***Team 1 / 2*** - When a team vs. team mission or campaign is selected, you may use these buttons to place players on the team you desire.

There is also a chat box on this screen, which you can use to communicate with other players in the game. Notice the dropdown button on the chat box. This enables you to expand the box downward to see more of the previous chat lines. Pressing this button again compresses the chat box to its original size.

Host Options

The host can set a number of options for a multiplayer game. The Host Options screen is reached by pressing the "Host Options" button on the Host Setup screen.

AI Orders - Determines which players can use the Comm Menu system to give orders to AI ships.

End Mission - Determines who can end the mission (by using the ALT-J key combination).

Time Limit - Specifies the maximum duration of a mission (in minutes). After this time has expired, all players are automatically warped out of the mission. A setting of "0" means no time limit.

Respawn Limit - The number of respawns available to a player in the mission. This value may be between "0" and the maximum number specified in the mission file.

Kill Limit - The mission ends when a player accumulates this number of kills.

Observers - This slider specifies the number of permanent observers allowed in the mission (0 - 4). This number applies only to the number of people who initially join a mission as observers. It has no bearing on players who become observers after running out of respawns.

Voice Transmission - Determines whether or not real-time voice transmission is allowed during the game.

Voice Quality - Sets the quality of real-time voice transmission (if enabled). The higher the setting, the more CPU usage for compression and decompression. A setting in the middle is a good balance between compression and CPU usage.

Message Duration - Specifies the number of seconds allowed for a real-time voice message.

Voice Wait - This setting specifies how long a player must wait after sending a real-time voice message before he can send a new message. For instance, if this option is set to 15 seconds, a player cannot send real-time voice messages more than once per 15 seconds.

Host Modifies Ships - If this option is enabled, only the game's host can modify ships during Ship Selection. The host can modify all players' ships.

STANDALONE (DEDICATED) SERVERS

In multiplayer FreeSpace 2, if you choose "Create Game" in the Ready Room, you are acting as a Non-Dedicated Game Server. Your machine is not only running your local game simulation, but it is also simulating the game for all other players in your game. With your computer performing both tasks, the other players may see performance problems, especially with five or more players in the game.

One way to avoid this is to run a Standalone Game Server. This enables one machine to run only the game simulation, without having to run the game for a local player as well. With the server not doing game rendering, more people can play with little or no performance hit.

> ***NOTE:*** *For FreeSpace 2 games with five or more players, it is strongly recommended that you use a Standalone Server. Non-Dedicated Servers cannot handle 8-12 people reliably. It is also strongly recommended that anyone running a Standalone Server be connected to at least a dual-channel ISDN line (preferably ADSL or T1).*

STARTING A STANDALONE SERVER

To run FreeSpace 2 as a Standalone Server, open an MS-DOS prompt to your FreeSpace 2 directory and type:

FS2 -standalone

Also, an icon for the Standalone Server can be found in the FreeSpace 2 directory off your Start menu.

A Windows dialog comes up with a tabbed interface listing your Standalone Server options. Once the default Server Name has been filled in, the server is up and running. If you change the Server Name field, it updates on players' Join screens.

Most of the interface options for the Standalone Server are self-explanatory. To shut down the server, click on "Shut Down" or simply close the application.

> ***NOTE:*** *FreeSpace 2 Standalone servers perform better under Windows NT than under Windows95/98.*

Standalone Config File

There's a file in your FreeSpace2\data directory called "multi.cfg"; this file determines the default options used when you run a Standalone Server. The following options are currently supported (a hyphen separates each option's name and parameters from its description):

+name <servername> – *sets the server name that appears in the games list.*

+pxo <channelname> – *makes your server appear on Parallax Online (PXO). The server then appears in the specified channel's games listing and uploads player statistics for anyone who plays on it. Public channel names must be prefixed by a "#" and private channels by a "+" sign.*

Examples:

+pxo #Team_Games – *puts server in the public Team_Games channel.*

+pxo +Biffs_Games – *creates private channel "Biffs_Games" and places server in it.*

> ***NOTE:*** *If you want to use a public channel, the name* must *match one of the default public channel names. If it does not match, the game is not placed in any channel and isn't visible to anyone.*

The +pxo option is on by default in the multi.cfg file, assigned to a Lobby Channel. If you do not use PXO with your Standalone Server, it still shows up on a player's game lists if it's local to him and he has clicked the "Broadcast Locally" option to "On" under Options/Multi. If it's not local to a player, he may still join your non-PXO server by manually entering your server's IP address in Options/Multi sub-screen.

+no_voice – *disallows voice transmission at any time*

+passwd <password> – *the first person to join the server when it's empty has to enter this password*

+low_update

+med_update

+high_update

+lan_update

The above four options enforce an upper limit on data rate for clients. For example, if the server has +high_update set, even if a client has LAN updates selected, he is limited to high updates. It is not recommended that you run a Standalone Server unless it can support at least high update levels.

+max_players # – *sets the maximum allowed players on your server. It's recommended that you keep this at a reasonable limit, based on your server's Internet connection type. The max supported players is 12.*

+ban <callsign> – *bans a given player. Up to 50 banned players are supported.*

These options can be entered in any order and in any combination, with repeats overriding the previously entered values.

STANDALONE SERVERS & MISSION FILES

Any FreeSpace 2 missions or campaigns appearing in your \data\missions directory are available for players to use on your Standalone Server. If a player does not have the mission file, the server automatically transfers it. Players are not able to upload missions to your server, however, so you have total control over the missions your Standalone Server offers.

SERVER LISTING ADDITIONS

Two symbols have been added to the server listings that appear in the Games screen. An asterisk (*) appears next to Standalone Servers. Non-Dedicated Servers have no asterisk. If a "C" appears next to the server name, it is currently running a Campaign mission (as opposed to a single, non-campaign mission).

BRIEFING

The multiplayer briefing gives all players their orders and instructions for this mission. In cooperative missions, this briefing is the same for all players in the game. For team vs. team missions, each team receives separate briefings.

SHIP SELECTION AND WEAPON LOADOUT

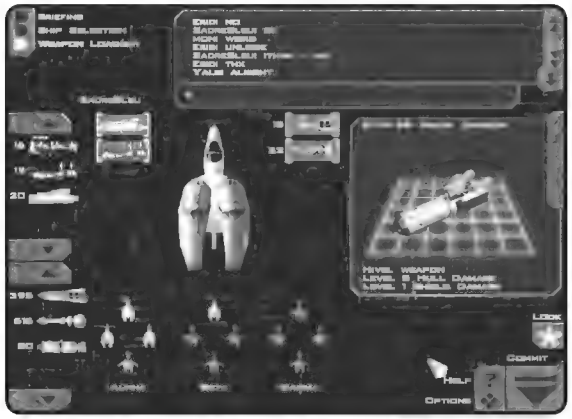
Ship selection for multiplayer depends on the mode of play. First, all players must be assigned to a ship and wing position, then ships and weapons may be selected. All players are initially

assigned a random ship, which may be changed by the host (or team captain in a team vs. team game).

In cooperative missions, the host of the game must assign all players to ships before players can choose their own ships and weapons. The host is free to drag and drop player names from one ship to another. For example, some players of the game may wish to fly in a particular wing that contains only bombers. The host can move those players into that wing. Once all players have been placed, the host clicks on the "Lock" button in the Ship Selection screen. Once players have been locked, they are free to start making ship and weapon selections. Once players have been locked and are free to choose their ships and weapons, they cannot be unlocked. Any ships that are not claimed by players are flown by AI (computer-controlled).

In team vs. team missions, the team captain for each team must assign players to ships before the ship selection process can begin. The team captain is designated by the host when the teams are initially formed, before the briefing stage begins. Once each team captain assigns players, the captain must click on the "Lock" button, after which all members of his team may select their ships and weapons.

After players have been locked, they are free to select different ships and weapons for themselves (if the host allows them to). Ship and weapon selection for multiplayer follow the same procedure as in single-player mode; the main difference is that



players can outfit only their own ships. The host has the ability to outfit his ship and any AI ships.

In cooperative missions, all players share the same ship and weapon resources (i.e., the ships and weapons taken by other players are not available for you). In team vs. team missions, all players on a particular team must share the same ship and weapon resources.

Once you are done making your ship and weapon choices, press the "Commit" button on any of the three screens (Briefing, Ship Selection, or Weapon Loadout). Once everyone has committed, you are ready to start your mission!

IN-MISSION

Missions in multiplayer games play basically the same as single-player missions, with a few exceptions.

When a multiplayer game is paused, every player in the game is paused automatically. The pause screen in multiplayer has a chat area for players to communicate during the pause time. The host can set (in the Host Options screen before the game starts) who may un-pause the game after it has been paused.

If you target a ship being flown by a human player, his Callsign appears above the Target View box on the HUD.

When you die in a multiplayer game, you might be able to respawn into a new ship and continue playing. The number of times a player is allowed to respawn is a mission setting that can be modified by the host in the Host Options screen (before the game starts). Once out of respawns, a player can either quit or remain in the mission as an observer.

The mission is over when an end condition is met (time limit or kill limit) or when any player who is allowed to end the mission engages his subspace drives. The host determines who can end the game this way, via a setting in the Host Options screen. Once the mission ends, all players are warped out and taken to the debriefing.

DEBRIEFING

The multiplayer Debriefing screen is very similar to the single-player version. The main addition is the ability to view mission statistics for any player currently still in the game by selecting that player in the player list box, then choosing the "Statistics" button in the upper left corner.

If you are playing in Campaign mode, once all players have accepted the results of the mission in the Debriefing screen, everyone is moved to the next mission in the multiplayer Campaign.

NETWORK/MULTIPLAYER OPTIONS

The Network/Multiplayer Options screen can be reached by pressing F2 from anywhere in the game, then selecting the "Multi" icon along the top of the Options screen.

On the left-hand side of this screen, you choose the network options that affect how your computer searches for multiplayer games to join. Click on the "TCP" button to look for games on PXO or over the Internet. Click on the "IPX" button to play over a LAN (Local Area Network).

To find a game over the Internet (except for one on PXO; see page 60), FreeSpace 2 needs to know the IP Address at which to find the game. Fill in an entry (or click on an existing entry) to tell FreeSpace 2 to search for a game at that address.

If you register with Parallax Online (PXO), you may use the area at the bottom left of this screen to type in your PXO username, password, and squadron (if you have one). When you enter the Ready Room, FreeSpace 2 validates your username with PXO and logs you on automatically. Once validated, any multiplayer game that you start is automatically registered with PXO. Also, any game statistics are transferred to PXO once you are done playing.

On the right-hand side of the screen are a number of "General" options. Once you're done setting these, click on the "Voice" button at the top right to see (and set) options for in-game voice during your mission.

GENERAL OPTIONS

Object Update Level

This option determines how quickly the game server sends position and orientation updates to players' machines. The lower the setting, the more prediction your machine uses to move ships and weapons between updates. The "Low" setting is recommended on slower dialup Internet connections.

Pilot / Squadron Images

With this option active, any time you play a multiplayer game, the server transfers the pilot and squadron images of other players in the game to you. If this option is off, these images are not transferred to your machine when you join a game.

Transfer Missions

This setting determines where transferred missions are placed. When you join a multiplayer game and do not have the mission that the host selects, the mission is automatically transferred to you. The "Multidata" folder is a folder created by FreeSpace 2 specifically to hold only disposable multiplayer data. The "Missions" folder is where all user-created missions get placed.

Flush Cache

You can use this setting to determine how long to keep disposable data in your "Multidata" folder. If you play multiplayer games with the same people, it might be a good idea to set this to "Never," meaning that the contents of this folder are never deleted by FreeSpace 2. If you are low on hard drive space, set this option to "Before Game" and all data in the folder is deleted before you play a new multiplayer game.

VOICE OPTIONS

Mic Test

Use this button to ensure that the microphone connected to your soundcard works properly with FreeSpace 2. After clicking on this button, you have three seconds to talk into your microphone. After the three-second time limit, your voice is played back to you. This test is also a good way to determine how best to talk into your microphone so that you can be understood easily.

Voice Quality

The quality setting can be used to change the quality of the compression used for the real-time voice system. The more lit dots, the higher the quality.

Voice Transmission

This setting determines whether you can receive real-time voice transmissions from other players during a multiplayer game. If you are on a slower dialup Internet connection, you might wish to turn this setting to "Off" to free up bandwidth for game data.

Mute

This area is active only after a multiplayer game has formed. You can use this section to mute the real-time voices from specific players, instead of having to turn the system completely off.

MESSAGES

FreeSpace 2 supports a number of ways to communicate with other players in the game. In addition to a chat box in all pre- and post-mission screens and during pauses, FreeSpace 2 supports the ability to record your voice through a microphone connected to your sound card and send it to all other players in the game (real-time voice). The real-time voice option is supported only by sound cards that enable recording and playback of sound simultaneously. To see if your sound card supports both, choose the "Setup" button in the Launcher and click on the Sound tab. The property sheet indicates whether or not your card supports real-time voice.

Using real-time voice is easy in FreeSpace 2. In any screen in which a chat box is present (any pre- or post-mission screen, as well as during pauses in a mission), you may press and hold the

~ key, which is directly above the TAB key. While holding this key, speak into your microphone. Once you are done, release the key and your recorded voice is sent to all other players in the game. The length of time you can talk is set by the host (see the earlier section on "Host Options" for more details).

During a mission, voice works slightly differently. There are four separate keys available for real-time voice and typed messages. Quickly tapping one of these keys enables to you type a message, while pressing and holding one of these keys enables you to send a real-time voice message.

IN-MISSION MESSAGING KEYS

1. Use the "1" key to send a message to everyone in the game. When typing a message, you may preface your message with "name:" to send your typed message to a specific player. When using the "name:" feature, your message is sent to all players whose Callsign begins with "name." So "Hungus: blah blah" sends the message "blah blah" to all players whose Callsigns begin with "Hungus." Note that the "name:" feature is case sensitive.
2. Use the "2" key to send a message to everyone on your team (team vs. team games only).
3. Use the "3" key to send a message to everyone on the opposing team (team vs. team games only).
4. Use the "4" key to send a message to the ship that you currently have targeted.

In addition to these in-mission messaging options, you may also send "orders" to other players in the game using the Comm Menu system. When you send messages using this system, that player receives a HUD message stating your order (he is, of course, free to ignore it).

OBSERVER MODE

An observer of a multiplayer game is simply a player who cannot directly interact with the progress of the mission. You may join a game as an observer by selecting the "Join as Observer" button in the Games screen. If you're actively playing a mission and you run out of respawns, you are given the option to return to the game as an observer.

Observers have a limited HUD and are allowed to use all targeting keys to view the status of any ship in the game. They may chat and send any kind of message. They may also use any of the external camera views.

SQUADWAR

SquadWar is another free service offered by Volition for FreeSpace 2 pilots. SquadWar enables multiplayer squadrons to challenge other squadrons for control of territory in a persistent FreeSpace 2 galaxy. SquadWar is an organized form of team vs. team multiplayer gameplay. PXO servers maintain a list of registered squadrons that are managed by users through a web page. Squadrons fight it out via team vs. team missions for control of star systems. The PXO database keeps track of which squadron controls which star system.

More information can be found at the SquadWar home page:

http://www.squadwar.com

FRED2

FRED2 stands for FReeSpace EDitor 2, a free utility included with FreeSpace 2. With FRED2, you can create your own FS2 missions, complete with every ship, object, weapon, and effect you see in the official Campaign. Your missions can stand alone or they can be strung into a Campaign of your own devising. They can be connected to the missions in FreeSpace 2, or they can follow a completely different storyline.

A shortcut to documentation on how to use FRED2 should appear in the FreeSpace 2 folder of your Start Menu.

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German Localization
Heiko Herrmann

FRED2 Documentation
Peter Drake

VOICE

In Los Angeles

Voice Producer
Fred Hatch

Voice Direction
Jamie Thomason

Voice Editor
Frank Szick

Voice Recording Engineers
Paul Andris
Ernie Sheesley

Assistant Recording Engineers
Eric Lewis
Lisa Carlon

Recorded at
Screenmusic Studios

Cast
Robert Loggia
Ronny Cox
Kurtwood Smith
Stephen Baldwin

In Chicago

Voice Producer
Ron Steele, Sr.

Voice Recording Engineer
Dave Steele

Recorded at
EKO Media Design Company

Cast
Sy Osborne
Tony Russell
Charles Gerace
Joe Sikora
Rick Weiss
Kurt Naebig
Dale Engram

In Champaign

Voice Recording Engineer
Scott Warren

Recorded at
Prairie Production Group

Cast
Roger Cooper
Robin Kaler
Peter Davis
Doug Quick
Roger Francisco
Dan Simeone
Tamara McDaniel
Mike Trippiedi
Jim Manley
John McKeighan
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FS2 Beta Testers
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Line Producer
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Division Director
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Jeremy Barnes

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Lisa Bucek

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Manual Layout & Design
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Traffic Manager
Paul Naftalis

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www.interplay.com/support/

Here you will find troubleshooting information on as well as information on regular system maintenance and performance.

DirectX	www.interplay.com/support/directx/
Joysticks	www.interplay.com/support/joystick/
Modems/Networks	www.interplay.com/support/modem/

(For game-specific information and additional troubleshooting, visit our main page at **www.interplay.com**)

If you have questions about the program, our Technical Support Department can help. Our web site contains up-to-date information on the most common difficulties with our products, and this information is the same as that used by our product support technicians. We keep the product support pages updated on a regular basis, so please check here first for no-wait solutions:

www.interplay.com/support/

If you are unable to find the information you need on our web site, please feel free to contact Technical Support via e-mail, phone, fax, or letter. Please be sure to include the following information in your e-mail message, fax, or letter:

- Title of Game
- Computer manufacturer
- Operating system (Windows 95, DOS 6.22, etc.)
- CPU type and speed in MHz
- Amount of RAM
- Sound card type and settings (address, IRQ, DMA)
- Video card
- CD-ROM
- Mouse driver and version
- Joystick and game card (if any)
- A copy of the CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files from your hard drive
- A description of the problem you're having

If you need to talk to someone immediately, call us at (949) 553-6678 Monday through Friday between 8:00AM-5:45PM, Pacific Standard Time with 24 hours, 7 days a week support available through the use of our automated wizard. Please have the above information ready when you call. This will help us answer your question in the shortest possible time. When you call you will initially be connected with our automated wizard. For information pertaining to your specific title, press "1" on the main menu and listen carefully to all prompts. All titles are listed alphabetically. After you have selected your title, the most common difficulties will be listed. If the difficulty you are having is not listed or you need additional assistance, you may press "0" on your games main menu, and you will be transferred to a Technical Support Representative. No hints or codes are available from this line. You must call Interplay's HINT Line for hints, tips, or codes at 1-900-370-PLAY (1-900-451-6869 $1.25 in Canada only). You must be 18 years +, have a touch-tone phone, and the cost is $0.95 per minute.

Interplay Productions Support Fax: (949) 252-2820

Interplay Productions Technical Support
16815 Von Karman Avenue • Irvine, CA 92606

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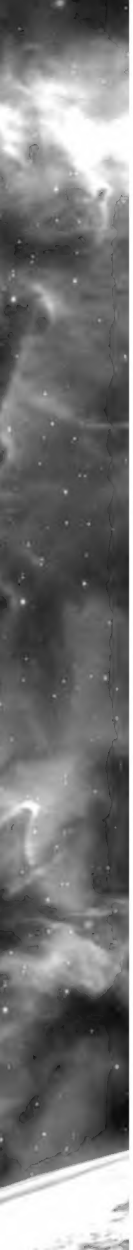

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